

DOME

FAST FACTS



EXTERIOR

- 165 feet high
- 80 feet in diameter
- At the time of its completion, it was second in size only to the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C.
- Four copper angels, each 18-feet tall and weighing thousands of pounds, sound trumpets in each of the compass' four directions
- The main dome is comprised of approximately 8,000 square feet of the original, 100-year-old copper
- A cross is located at the top of the dome's copper cupola

INTERIOR

- 120 feet from the floor
- Italian artist Gonippo Raggi was the man responsible for the Basilica's interior artwork including the huge painting on the dome
- The artwork depicts the Assumption and Coronation of the Blessed Mother
- At the Shrine's highest point – and the center of the dome's painting – is a dove of peace, symbolizing the Holy Spirit
- Around the dome's outer edge are the 12 apostles and three archangels. An angelic host carries Mary heavenward where the members of the Holy Trinity await her.



TIMELINE

1874: As a seminarian, Nelson Baker takes part in a pilgrimage to Europe during the summer of 1874. On this trip, he is inspired by the beautiful shrines of France and Italy. At the Basilica of Notre Dames des Victoires in Paris (*pictured*), he adopts a mission to spread devotion to the Blessed Mother, under the title of Our Lady of Victory, in America.



1882: Father Baker is named superintendent of the Limestone Hill Institutions in what would become Lackawanna, N.Y.

1919: A fire in St. Patrick's Church causes significant damage. Its critical areas are repaired, but additional restoration work never gets underway.

1921: St. Patrick's is razed and the cornerstone of the National Shrine of Our Blessed Lady of Victory is laid.

1922: An appeal goes out to Father Baker's benefactors throughout the country to "buy a brick" of marble for \$10 to support the construction effort.

1925: The first Mass is held at the Shrine on Christmas day.

1926: The Shrine is consecrated and named a Minor Basilica by Vatican officials, becoming only the second such church in the U.S. at the time.

2021: Restoration projects, intended to address interior and exterior damage caused by water infiltration throughout the Shrine, begin.

2024: 150 years after Father Baker's pilgrimage to Europe, the "Save the Dome" program is announced. When completed, the Basilica's most iconic feature will be repaired and restored.

